

The Remarkable Muscular Development of Miss Charmion, Which Seems Utterly to Deny the Theory That Woman's Strength May Not Be Carried as Far as a Man's.

How the Fashion to Be Athletic Is Changing the Traditions Among Women and the Puzzling Question Raised About "Average" Strength

A BUXOM Hungarian girl, fresh from a New York farm, in representing the persistent advances of a "masher" on the streets of the big city, struck him a blow which not only laid him with fanning supineness on the sidewalk, but dislocated his jawbone as well. An appreciative magistrate, commenting on the feat, remarked: "Now, if all the women were as strong as the men and were as ready and as able in defence as this lady, there would be little or none of such annoyances as that to which she was subjected. Indeed, the strong woman would solve a great many of our problems—the strong woman with the punch!"

Admitting that the judicial pronouncement was tempered with something of playfulness at the ending, the wisdom of it is evident, though the court seemed to be unaware that, even as the comment was made, the era of the strong woman was well in the process of development.

There are hundreds and hundreds of athletic women, trained in gymnasium and field, commented Norman Selby, who gained fistic distinction as "Kid McCoy," "whom I'd hate to have land hard on the side of my jaw. The day of the weakling woman is passing—it has to pass before the new spirit so powerfully affecting woman, both mentally, economically and physically. Time will come—even if you and I never see it—when the term 'weaker sex' must be regarded as a joke. And I am not giving a suffragette talk at that."

Her Deadly Embrace.

As Mr. Selby has been devoting himself to the physical training of others and to "mental hygiene," he may be accepted as something of an authority. He tells of one of his pupils, a strapping lass of 18, who, during a wrestling bout, secured a strangle-hold on him, and, with arms that seemed as hard as steel cables, relentlessly began to crush the breath from him. Skilled as he is in all the tricks of the game and with the strength of perfect physical condition, he was unable to break the hold. "She could easily have strangled me to death," he commented.

Nor is this exceptional. It would appear, according to such a high authority as Dr. Dudley A. Sargent, director of the Hemenway gymnasium of Harvard, and who has also supervised the work of the students of Radcliffe College. He tells of a scrubwoman at Harvard who put up a 100-pound dumb-bell above her head with each hand.

So the question has been asked: If some women can be strong, why is not the average woman stronger than she is? The same question may be asked of the man. But, as a matter of fact, the average man is not so much stronger than the average

woman, while the strong woman matches very closely the strong man. It has been asserted that the strong are growing stronger and the weak weaker. That means, of course, that eventually the weak will be eliminated and that the vigorous, virile woman of brawn and beauty will be the prevailing type.

Demonstrated by the War.

The world's greatest war is proving a big factor in this interesting demonstration, for it has shown in the very beginning that weakness is no longer fashionable; that fainting has ceased to be a polite accomplishment, and is irrevocably out of date. Woman is fighting in the trenches; doing the work of the ox and the horse in the field; bending her back and straining her muscles at tasks that call for the stamina which, when combined with tough fibre, makes the strength for which man is vaunted.

"All of this learned talk of biological limitation to the contrary," observes Newberry O. Norwood, "specialization can produce a woman as strong as Samson. Woman is just what her environment has made her, and the ordinary household duties and the polite occupations of society are not calculated to produce a race of strong women. But it is different now, and in this era of applied eugenics there is no reason why there should not be developed in time to come a race of super-women which will be the mothers of men strong beyond our present beliefs."

And here again Dr. Sargent bears most direct testimony to the possibilities of this motherhood of might. "It is an interesting fact," says he, "that most of the famous athletes whom I have examined attributed their great power largely to the fine physiques of their mothers. The mother of Louis Cyr, the strongest man in the world, could readily shoulder a barrel of flour and carry it up several flights of stairs."

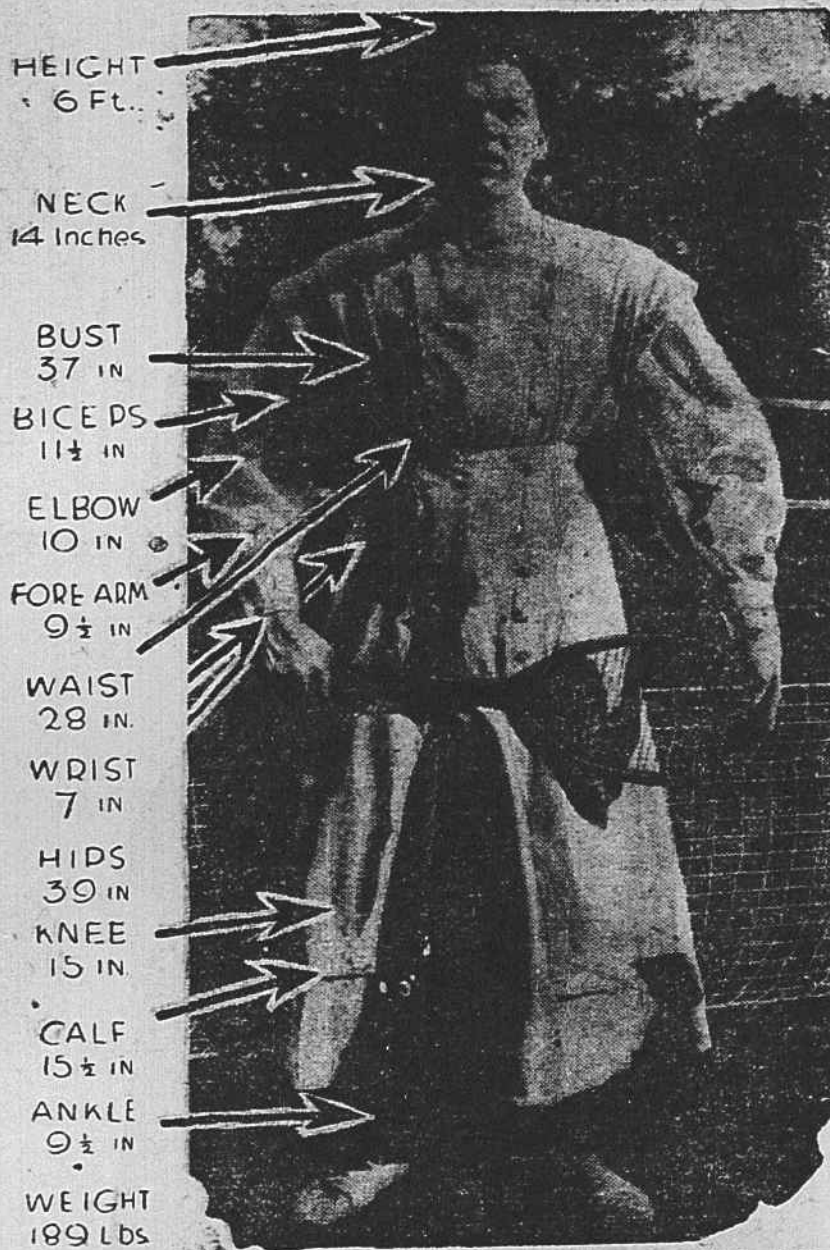
Some Real Strong Women.

He draws attention to the fact, furthermore, that great feats of strength, skill and endurance are frequently performed by women at the circus and the vaudeville theatre, and it is well known in the profession that some of the best gymnasts in the business are women disguised as men.

When Margaret A. Graham, a "reeler" in the Ludlow mills, several years ago threw a baseball 262 feet and 6 inches, breaking the feminine record by 50 feet, the feat was heralded around the world, not because the juvenile giantess was proclaimed the "strongest woman in the universe," but because she had so remarkable athletic record.

There have been many women whose feats entitle them to claim the title of the strongest, beginning with

Changing the Traditions Among



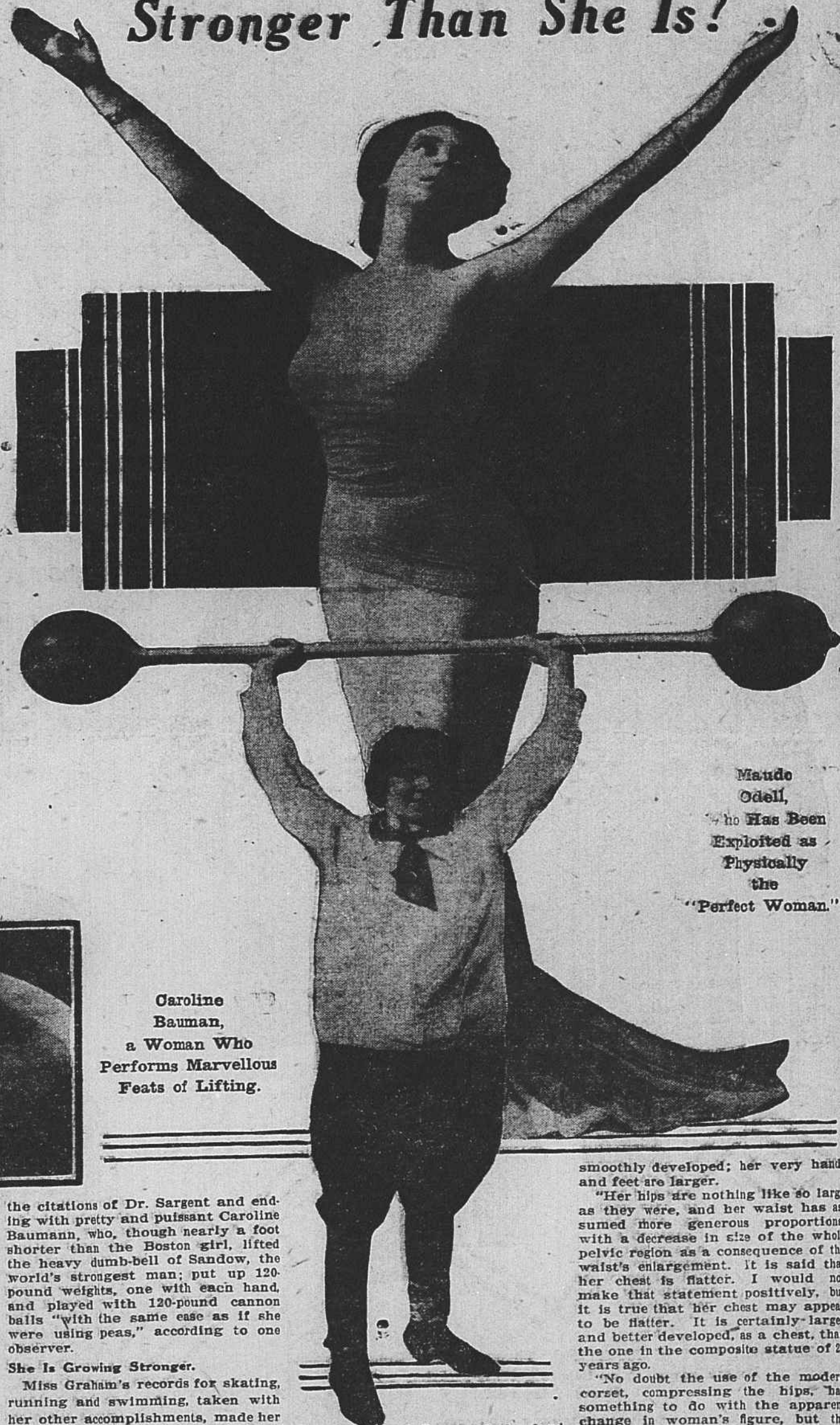
Development of Margaret A. Graham, the Strong Girl of the Ludlow Mills, Who Threw a Baseball the Distance of 262 Feet.



Physical Proportions That Give Support to Dr. Sargent's Declaration That Women's Development Is Coming More Closely to Approximate That of Man.

IF SOME Women Can be So Strong

Why Isn't the Average Woman Stronger Than She Is?



Maudie Odell, Who Has Been Exploited as Physically the "Perfect Woman."

Caroline Bauman, a Woman Who Performs Marvellous Feats of Lifting.

the citations of Dr. Sargent and ending with pretty and puissant Caroline Bauman, who, though nearly a foot shorter than the Boston girl, lifted the heavy dumb-bell of Sandow, the world's strongest man; put up 120-pound weights, one with each hand, and played with 120-pound cannon balls "with the same ease as if she were using peas," according to one observer.

She Is Growing Stronger.

Miss Graham's records for skating, running and swimming, taken with her other accomplishments, made her the figure that had the strongest appeal to women, who, while they did not aspire to become at once prodigies of strength, still were ardent in the desire to develop from the weaker type into the vigorous healthfulness of the other. Thus they are in sport today—not the polite sport of the horse and the croquet court merely, but the sport of golf and tennis, of boating and swimming and running and general athletics.

In such a discussion as this there naturally comes to mind Dr. Sargent's familiar composite statue of the modern American woman, made from 20,000 measurements prior to 1890. According to his own admission, the distinguished physical trainer would have to shape an entirely new figure were he to represent the strong, athletic woman of today. In it would he have to combine all of the pronounced characteristics of the all-round athlete with

the modifying influence of the feminine line.

Theophile Gautier saw in the Greek marble Hermaphrodite one of the most beautiful pieces of work in all sculpture—the flawless, perfect human body; the poetry of line of the one sex blended with the strength of the other, the balance absolute, like a song in whose perfection there is the note of finality. How nearly will the new statue of the American woman approximate the admiration of Gautier?

More Like Men.

"Woman has been thoroughly made over since the time that composite statue was designed," says Dr. Sargent. "Her figure is approximating more that of man. Her grandmother's sloping shoulders, no longer in fashion, have disappeared. Woman's shoulders now are broad, athletic shoulders, well knit with muscle, like her back. Her neck is thicker and more muscular; her limbs are more

smoothly developed; her very hands and feet are larger.

"Her hips are nothing like so large as they were, and her waist has assumed more generous proportions, with a decrease in size of the whole pelvic region as a consequence of the waist's enlargement. It is said that her chest is flatter. I would not make that statement positively, but it is true that her chest may appear to be flatter. It is certainly larger and better developed, as a chest, than the one in the composite statue of 25 years ago.

"No doubt the use of the modern corset, compressing the hips, has something to do with the apparent change in woman's figure, but the vitally influencing thing has been her indulgence in outdoor exercise, together with her devotion to general athletics. It has actually made a new woman of her, even to her hands and feet, which are bigger and stronger and more useful.

"Women in the savage state were so like men that it was hard to tell the sexes apart. As civilization progressed the peculiarly feminine characteristics have been overdeveloped. But the pendulum has begun to swing the other way. Women are again coming to look and be more like men."

The word "canon" is Greek for "rule," and is itself derived from "canna," a reed, which was selected by carpenters on account of its straightness. Hence from a measuring rule, it became a figurative rule for measuring and regulating church doctrines.

Group of German Gymnasium Girls at Practice.

